

16 April 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Interim Report on Planning for Military Estimates

25X1 1. For some weeks a working group from this Office, chaired by [ ] has been considering the changes and reforms that should be made in this year's military estimates. We have seen the suggestions submitted to you by Messrs. Rogers, Laird, and Kissinger, talked with Andy Marshall, worked over some ideas of our own, and picked up other thoughts from here and there.

2. It is clear that the consumers want, among other things, (a) much more copious setting-forth of evidence and argument, at least on the more important and controversial matters; (b) more history, in order to see how Soviet forces got to be as they are; (c) somewhat more attention to Soviet military doctrine, economic constraints, etc.; (d) more graphs and charts; and (e) estimates carried out to five years.

3. How far all this can successfully be done will only be known by trying. We have outlines for various papers, and we have graphics people already working on the problem. We shall use numerous Annexes, probably of two kinds: (a) for more lengthy and detailed descriptive matter, as e.g., for the fronts, armies, divisions, etc. of Soviet ground forces, and (b) for technical discussions in detail -- including those involving disagreements -- as e.g., on the SS-9 and the SA-5 if these subjects are still lively issues as of next fall. We are already engaged in some preliminary drafting.

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4. The consumers also ask for an additional estimate for high-level attention to follow the major estimates on the forces. This we will prepare. They suggest no other change from the present three-paper division of subject matter -- i.e., into NIE's 11-8, 11-3, and 11-14. Nevertheless we are contemplating a modest rearrangement as follows:

NIE 11-8 would be called Soviet Forces for Intercontinental Attack. Like the present 11-8 it would cover ICBM's, heavy bombers, nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines, etc., but would omit MRBM's, IRBM's, medium bombers, etc., except as some allusions might be necessary.

NIE 11-3 on Soviet Strategic Defense Forces would be essentially as before, with the addition of Soviet ASW capabilities (as requested by the White House).

NIE 11-14 Soviet Forces for Attack in Eurasia would contain most of what is in the present 11-14, plus MRBM's, IRBM's, diesel powered submarines, medium bombers, etc., and minus those traditional parts of 11-14 which have discussed forces for distant military action - sea and airlift, etc.

NIE 11-7 would be a new paper on Soviet capabilities to use military forces in distant areas - primarily in the "third world". This would be less a description of hardware than a consideration of capabilities to move forces - airlift, sealift, base structures, etc., together with something on military aid programs (the last mainly to satisfy the Army).

5. There may well be problems with this rearrangement. The lower-level military have already made mild preliminary protests,

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though we have had no extended discussion with them, and some of their apprehension is no doubt sheer bureaucratic resistance to innovation. Willard Matthias thinks the proposed arrangement not far-reaching enough, and asked me to give you his counter-suggestion, which is attached. Before going any further, I would like to ascertain whether you have views on the matter, pro or con. Could we talk about it at a convenient time?



ABBOT SMITH  
Director  
National Estimates

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Attachment

C E N T R A L   I N T E L L I G E N C E   A G E N C Y  
O F F I C E   O F   N A T I O N A L   E S T I M A T E S

26 March 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR THE BOARD

SUBJECT: Dissenting Views to the Report of the Working  
Group on Military Estimates

In my view, the proposals outlined by  report  
constitute an insufficient departure from present practices.  
I propose a fourfold approach to the problem along the following  
lines:

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I. A continuing book on Soviet/EE military strengths and capabilities should be maintained on a looseleaf basis. It would deal with what is known and what can be estimated with a relatively high degree of probability -- 60% or better. Principal staffing responsibility would rest with OSR. Anyone in the community could propose changes; these would be studied and formulated by OSR; the ONE Board and Staff would review them; if there was doubt or dissent, there would follow the usual coordination process; final approval would be accorded by the USIB (though this could be done in writing, rather than in formal meeting).

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downgrading and  
declassification

The theory behind this is that these data are of sufficient importance to be "national intelligence" and therefore binding, but often of such detail that their inclusion in estimates of the type we do now dilutes both consideration of important (often technical) questions relevant to them and consideration of the broader questions of military policy which those estimates also address. Moreover, different analysts are properly involved, and in the existing process we tend to have compromise negotiators not really competent to handle either. Finally what we know and what we estimate and what we postulate and what we guess tend to be insufficiently delineated and convey an impression of much greater clarity and certainty of knowledge and judgment than exists.

II. An annual or semi-annual summary of Soviet/EE military capabilities should be published for senior policy makers. It would summarize the information in the looseleaf book. It would also state clearly what we know and what we don't know. It would, where possible, interpret these capabilities in terms of capacity to do, or not to do, certain things -- such as intervene in far-distant areas, destroy certain types of targets, etc.

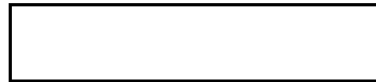
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III. An annual estimate of Soviet military policy should be prepared. This paper should consider the various strategies and options open to the USSR and take account of such evidence as there is (doctrines, developments in research and testing, etc.,) relevant to these various options. It can, and should, state the outside limits of Soviet policies (such as "a clear military superiority"), identify such policies as seem clear, and express views (even if there are dissenters) on what courses of action at the point of writing seem most likely. While the general dimensions of future force strengths might be discussed, the paper should avoid specific projections on a year-by-year basis of specific force goals.

IV. In addition to the above, we should do individual estimates on specific problems when necessary and appropriate. The SS-9 seems to me to be such a subject. The object should not necessarily be to arrive at specific answers to all questions; the object should be to shed light. If there are anomalies or uncertainties or sheer ignorance, they should be openly stated. If there are varying interpretations of the evidence, they should be disclosed. If there are important points regarding which the methodology, rather than the evidence, is crucial, the methodology should be

explained. In short, this method of dealing with current, critical issues will do much more to clarify the problem, and hopefully to prevent misuse of estimates, than continuation of the present omnibus system in which crucial elements of the estimating process are lost under the pressure of time.



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